



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

hand, the reduction of his living quarters to a *pthos*, together with the coarse fun of the comic poets, perpetually directed against the irksome embarrassments of the parasitic temper, which cannot live from its own resources but eats the bread of belittling dependence upon the wealthy, may serve to reflect that ready individual courage of man against man, that cheerful acceptance of hardships in matters of food and shelter, and especially that rough humor and biting scorn of everything soft and effeminate, which is continually putting itself in evidence all along the line of adventurous colonial life (p. 259).

On p. 255, in a rhetorical passage, we read that Pompey "viewed the body with emotion and averted eye." This suggests strabismus in Pompey, and it surely deserves a smile. Aside from this criticism upon its rhetoric, the monograph is a first-class special study in Greek history. It is the kind of work we need done in this country, of the sort that will help to gain for the study of ancient history that respect which it must yet attain in American universities.

W. L. WESTERMANN

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

---

*Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain.* Conférences faites au Collège de France par FRANZ CUMONT. Paris; Leroux 1907. Pp. xxii + 333.

The content of eight special lectures delivered by M. Cumont is here printed as Vol. XXIV of the *Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque de Vulgarisation*. Its purpose is to put the world at large in possession of the vital facts and conclusions drawn from the study of the oriental religions in their relation to Roman religion, and consequently to the civilization of our own time. Lest, however, any *eruditissimus Americanorum* take fright at the word *vulgarisation*, it should be said that M. Cumont's chapters are characterized by his usual thoroughness and solidity, and that he has added to the 254 pp. of his text 80 pp. of notes for the use of the specialist.

In the preface M. Cumont declares his concern to be with the influence of orientalism upon Roman paganism alone. Roman territory, into which Christianity came already a well-developed religion, is not the place to begin the study of the mutual influences of Christianity and the oriental faiths. The proper field for this is Asia Minor, among the Judaeo-pagan communities where the new religion had its inception. Chap. i, "Rome et l'orient, les sources":—We are reminded that the East, not then as now decadent, was a realm of culture and wealth, and that the coming of the oriental religions was only a single feature of a general orientalization of Rome, of which the orientalization of the court of Diocletian was one other sign. Chap. ii, "Pourquoi les cultes orientaux se sont propagés":—The spread of the oriental religions was due to merit.

In contrast to the cold and formal religions of Rome the oriental faiths, with their hoary traditions and basis of science and culture, their fine ceremonial, the excitement attending on their mysteries, their deities with hearts of compassion, their cultivation of the social bond, their appeal to conscience and their promises of purification and reward in a future life, were personal rather than civic, and satisfied the individual soul. Chap. iii, "L'Asie mineure":—The first breach in the old system, made by the Great Mother, was really an accident due to Roman observance of the Sibylline oracles. Her cult facilitated the coming of other eastern religions, and finally, with them, formed the foremost faiths of Rome. The strange Cybele-Attis rites, fully practiced first under Claudius, were, like other rites of like nature, the tradition of barbarous times; the firm hold they acquired is explained by the fact that they underwent a deep spiritualization. Chap. iv, "L'Egypte":—The cult of Isis owed its final success to the ideality of which its doctrines were capable, and to its adaptability: to its growth in purity and spirituality; to the charm of its ritual; to the sympathetic nature of its deities, and to the satisfaction afforded by its promises of eternal participation in the divine life. Chap. v, "La Syrie":—The Semitic conception made the distance between deity and man greater than was the case with other religions; their Baal was universal and all-powerful, protected all races, and ruled over all the spaces of nature as the Most High, deathless and eternal. Being also a solar deity, it was only necessary to isolate him from this world to make him the Christian God. Chap. vi, "La Perse":—The great feature of the Persian religion was dualism—the existence of Good and Evil. Attaching supreme importance to the principles of truth, loyalty, justice, fraternity, and purity, promising salvation, Mithraism satisfied both those who were looking for religious novelty and those who stood for the old school of Roman society. Chap. vii, "L'Astrologie et la magie":—The decay of the oracle, of divination, and the critical spirit made possible the success of astrology, which, with magic, came in the train of the oriental religions. Its teaching of the cosmic year and the coming destruction of the world by fire and flood suggests the Christian belief regarding the end of the world. Magic was degenerate physics, as astrology was perverted astronomy, and the essential doctrine of both was the solidarity of the universe and the sympathy of matter and spirit. Astrology determined cosmic influences, magic attempted to nullify them. Both were scientific in being founded upon observation of nature, but derived their strength from being after all faiths. Chap. viii, "La transformation du paganisme romain":—The mass of religions at Rome finally became so impregnated by neo-Platonism and orientalism that paganism may be called a single religion with a fairly distinct theology, whose doctrines were somewhat as follows: adoration of the elements, especially the cosmic bodies; the reign of

one God, eternal and omnipotent, with messenger attendants; spiritual interpretation of the gross rites yet surviving from primitive times; assurance of eternal felicity to the faithful; belief that the soul was on earth to be proved before its final return to the universal spirit; the existence of an abysmal abode for the evil, against whom the faithful must keep up an unceasing struggle; the destruction of the universe, the death of the wicked, and the eternal happiness of the good in a reconstructed world. With such a conception of latter-day paganism, we may more easily understand its strength and the bitter rivalry between it and the new faith, as well as the facility with which pagan society, once its cause was proved hopeless, turned to Christianity. The religion of Symmachus resembled the Christian faith far more than it resembled the paganism of Augustus.

No one is better qualified than the author of the *Mysteries of Mithras* to render an account of the subject of oriental religion; for in doing this he is writing of activities *quorum pars magna fuit*. These lectures are not compilations, nor mere reviews of progress; they are full of M. Cumont's own contributions, and almost every page bears testimony to his originality and keenness of vision—for he is always *felicissime audax*. It is in its main conclusions, however, not in its details, that the great importance of the work lies; it is not a mere assemblage of evidence for the use of the comparatively few who are students of ancient religion. It is much more. It is a work for society at large—one of the kind whose conclusions are vital and really enter into life, one of the kind which afford a signal justification of the laborious accumulation and ordering of the infinity of details, in themselves petty and insignificant, which compose the foundation of fact for the beautiful structure of appreciation. It is to be hoped that an English translation will soon appear.

GRANT SHOWERMAN

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

---

*Die italischen Rundbauten.* Eine archaeologische Studie von  
WALTER ALTMANN. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhand-  
lung, 1906. Pp. 101. M. 5.

The circular structure of classical antiquity has always appealed with special force to artists and architects, and the discovery of the primitive round building in the Terramare and elsewhere in comparatively recent times has excited the interest of students in its history. In the present monograph the author undertakes to show that the circular structure was originally the prevailing form throughout Europe, and that it passed through an entirely independent course of development. This development in Italy he treats in three periods—the prehistoric, the historical down to the end of the republic, and the imperial.